

Sūrah At-Tahrim (The Prohibiting)

This Sūrah is Madanī, and it has 12 verses and 2 sections

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 - 5

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ ۖ تَبْتَغِي مَرْضَاتَ أَزْوَاجِكَ ۗ
وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١﴾ قَدْ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ تَحِلَّةَ أَيْمَانِكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
مَوْلَاكُمْ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢﴾ وَإِذْ أَسَرَّ النَّبِيُّ إِلَىٰ بَعْضِ
أَزْوَاجِهِ حَدِيثًا ۚ فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَتْ بِهِ وَأَظْهَرَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَرَفَ بَعْضُهُ
وَأَعْرَضَ عَنْ بَعْضٍ ۚ فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَهَا بِهِ قَالَتْ مَنْ أَنْبَاكَ هَذَا ۖ قَالَ نَبَّأَنِي
الْعَلِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ ﴿٣﴾ إِنْ تَتُوبَا إِلَى اللَّهِ فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا ۚ وَإِنْ
تَظَاهَرَا عَلَيْهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ مَوْلَاهُ وَجِبْرِيلُ وَصَالِحُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ ظَهِيرٌ ﴿٤﴾ عَسَىٰ رَبُّهُ إِنْ طَلَّقَنَّ أَنْ يُبْدِلَهُ
أَزْوَاجًا خَيْرًا مِّنْكَنَّ مُسْلِمَتٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ قَتَلَتْ تُغْنِي عَنْكِ سِتْرُكَ
تُحِبُّ وَأَبْكَارًا ﴿٥﴾

O Holy Prophet, why do you ban (on your self) something that Allah has made lawful for you, seeking the pleasure of your wives? And Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very Merciful. [1] Allah has prescribed (the way of) absolution from your oaths. And Allah is your protector, and He is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

[2] And (remember) when the Holy Prophet told one of his wives something in secret. So, when she disclosed it (to another wife), and Allah made it known to him, he told (the disclosing wife) part of it, and bypassed another part. So when he informed her about it, she said, "Who told you about this?" He said, "It is told to me by the All-Knowing, the All-Aware. [3]

(O two wives of the Holy Prophet,) If both of you repent to Allah, then (your conduct calls for it, because) your hearts have diverted. And if you back each other against him (the Holy Prophet), then Allah is his supporter, and Jibrīl and righteous believers and, after all that, angels are his helpers. [4] It is hoped that, if he divorces you, Allah will give him in your place wives better than you, submissive to Allah, believing, devout, penitent, steadfast in worship, fasting, previously married and virgins. [5]

Commentary

Cause of Revelation

It is recorded in Ṣaḥīḥ of Bukhārī and in other collection of Aḥādīth, on the authority of Sayyidah ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها, that it was a daily practice of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to visit each of his wives after ‘aṣr prayer for a short time inquiring about their welfare. Once he visited Sayyidah Zainab رضي الله عنها and spent more time with her than normal and had some honey offered by her. Sayyidah ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها says: "I developed some envy and in consultation with Ḥafṣah رضي الله عنها decided that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would visit any one of us, she should say to him 'you have had *Maghāfir*', (a herb that resembled gum with a slightly unpleasant smell.)"¹ They executed their plan. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "I have not had any *Maghāfir*. I only had some honey." The Holy wife said: "It is possible that the honeybee might have sat on the *Maghāfir* shrub and drank its nectar. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, because of his natural dislike for unpleasant odour, swore and promised not to take honey any more. However, he did not want the feelings of Sayyidah Zainab رضي الله عنها to be hurt, and therefore he said to his wife that the incident should be kept secret and should not be recounted to anyone else. But she told about it to another wife.

[1] It should be noted here that these words were spoken by them in an interrogative accent, and therefore it was not a false statement. (Muhammad Taqi Usmani).

Some reports say that it was at the house of Sayyidah Ḥafṣah رضي الله عنها that he was served with honey, and that the wives who planned were Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah, Saudah and Ṣafiyyah رضي الله عنهن. Other reports recount the incident in other ways. It is possible that many incidents of similar nature might have taken place and these verses were revealed after them. [Bayān-ul-Qur'ān].

In brief, these verses tell us that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ banned a lawful thing [honey] on himself by swearing an oath. If such an act is done for a genuine need or expedience, [*maṣlahah*], it is permissible; it is not a sin. But the incident does not show that there was no such need for him to have the trouble of baning a lawful thing on himself. He had done this for the pleasure of his holy wives. In such circumstances, it was not necessary for him to have pleased them. Therefore, the verse, compassionately addresses the Holy Prophet ﷺ **يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ ۚ تَبْتَغِي مَرْضَاتَ أَزْوَاجِكَ ۖ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ** (O Prophet, why do you ban (on your self) something that Allah has made lawful for you, seeking the pleasure of your wives? And Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very Merciful...66:1) According to the principles of general stylistics, the Qur'ān does not address the Holy Prophet ﷺ by his name but by his Prophetic title thus: 'O Prophet' which is his special honour. Although this is a loving question posed by way of compassion, it could have created the misunderstanding that he has committed a major error and he is being questioned about it. The concluding phrase allays this suspicion: **وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ** meaning that even if it would have been a sin (for the sake of argument), then 'Allah is Most-Forgiving, Very Merciful.'

Ruling

There are three ways in which one can prohibit a 'lawful thing' for himself, the details of which were given under verse [87] of Sūrah Al-Mā'idah in Ma'āriful Qur'ān Vol.3/pp239-241. **يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحَرِّمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ** 'O those who believe, do not make unlawful good things that Allah has made lawful for you__[5:87] The three ways may be summarised here thus: [1] If someone holds a lawful thing as unlawful as part of his religious belief, it is *kufr* and an enormous sin. [2] If he does not believe it as unlawful in religion, but bans something on himself by swearing an oath without any need to do so, it is a sinful act, and it is necessary for him to break the oath and expiate, which will be discussed

later. However, If this is done for some need or advantage, it is permissible but undesirable. [3] If someone neither believes a lawful thing to be unlawful, nor swears an oath to ban it on himself, but makes a resolve in his/her mind to abandon the lawful thing for ever. If this resolution for permanent abandonment is with the intention of reward, it would be an innovation (*bid'ah*) in the established religion and monasticism which is a reproachable sin. If such a restriction is not with the intention of reward, but rather for some other reason, such as for treatment of a physical ailment or spiritual malady, it is absolutely permissible. Reports about some noble Ṣūfīs who abandoned some lawful things fall under this last category.

In this incident, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ swore an oath to abstain from honey. After the revelation of the verse, he broke the oath and expiated for it. As reported in Ad-Durr-ul-Manthūr, he emancipated a slave in payment of his expiation. [Bayān-ul-Qur'ān]

قَدْ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ تَحِلَّةَ أَيْمَانِكُمْ (Allah has prescribed [the way of] absolution from your oaths....66:2). This verse reminds that where it is necessary or better to break the oath, Allah has prescribed a way to absolve oneself from the liability of the oath by expiation, the details of which are given in other verses.

وَإِذْ أَسَرَّ النَّبِيُّ إِلَى بَعْضِ أَزْوَاجِهِ حَدِيثًا (And [remember] when the Prophet told one of his wives something in secret...66:3). The Holy Prophet ﷺ confided a certain secret in one of his wives. According to most versions of the authentic report, the 'secret' in this verse refers to the ban the Holy Prophet ﷺ imposed on himself about honey, but at the same time he did not want Sayyidah Zainab's رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا feelings to be hurt and therefore he directed the wife to keep it secret from others, but the disclosing wife divulged the secret to another wife, as follows in the next verse. Although there are some other reports that explain the 'secret' in some other way, what has been mentioned above is in accordance with the most authentic narrations.

فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَتْ بِهِ وَأَظْهَرَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَرَفَ بَعْضُهُ وَأَعْرَضَ عَنْ بَعْضٍ (So, when she disclosed it [to another wife], and Allah made it known to him, he told [the disclosing wife] part of it, and bypassed another part...66:3). In other words, when the disclosing wife divulged the secret to another wife, and Allah disclosed

this fact to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he complained to the disclosing wife about her disclosure, but he did not convey to her the whole information. Instead, he communicated part of it to her and withheld part of it. This was because of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ magnanimity and high morals. If he had disclosed the entire information he had received from Allah, it would have embarrassed her most profoundly. Who was the disclosing wife and who was the one to whom the secret was disclosed? The Qur'ān is silent on their identity and does not name them. According to the best received narratives, it would appear that it was Sayyidah Ḥafṣah رضي الله عنها whom the Holy Prophet ﷺ directed to keep the matter secret, and she divulged it to Sayyidah 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها, as recorded in Bukhārī on the authority of Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه which will be narrated later.

Some narratives report that when Sayyidah Ḥafṣah رضي الله عنها divulged the secret, the Holy Prophet ﷺ decided to divorce her, but Allah sent Jibrā'īl عليه السلام to him, preventing him from divorcing her on the ground that she offered many prayers and kept fasts abundantly. Her name appears in the list of his wives in Paradise. [Maḥzarī]

إِنْ تَتُوبَا إِلَى اللَّهِ فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا [O two wives of the Prophet,] If both of you repent to Allah, then [your conduct calls for it, because] your hearts have diverted....66:4). The reference here is made to two of his blessed wives who, as mentioned above in brief, contrived to draw the Holy Prophet ﷺ into swearing an oath and making the aforementioned promise to abstain from honey. Who are they? Bukhārī and other collections of Traditions record a lengthy Tradition about this on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه who narrates that he was always on the look-out to enquire of Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه as to who were the two wives to whom reference had been made in the above verse. So, when Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه was on his way to pilgrimage, the former joined him. One day, in the course of the journey, the latter went to answer the call of nature. When he returned, the former had arranged water for the latter's ablution. He poured water on his hands. Whilst pouring the water for ablution, he enquired as to who were the two wives to whom reference is made in the dual verb إِنْ تَتُوبَا (If both of you repent) Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه asked him in surprise: 'Do you not know who they were?' Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه said: 'No!' Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه said they were Ḥafṣah and 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها, and then proceeded to recount a lengthy story related to this incident which also contained some incidents

that took place earlier. The details of the incident are available in Tafsir Mazhari. This verse addresses the two blessed wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and requires them to turn to Allah as their hearts have deviated, albeit what they did, stem from their love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, but in the process they, in consultation with one another, adopted a way that hurt the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This is a sin for which repentance was necessary.

وَإِنْ تَظْهَرَا عَلَيْهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ مَوْلَاهُ وَجِبْرِيلُ (And if you back each other against him [the Prophet], then Allah is his supporter, and Jibril and righteous believers and, after all that, angels are his helpers....66:4). The current verse warns the wives that if they do not repent and please the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, they will not cause any loss to him, because Allah is his Protector, and so are Jibril, every right-acting believer and, furthermore, the other angels too will come to his support, and it will be the wives themselves who will suffer loss.

عَسَىٰ رُءُؤُهُ إِنْ طَلَّقَكُنَّ أَنْ يُبَدِّلَهُ أَزْوَاجًا خَيْرًا مِنْكُنَّ (It is hoped that, if he divorces you, Allah will give him in your place wives better than you, submissive to Allah, believing, devout, penitent, steadfast in worship, fasting, previously married and virgins....66:5). The verse refutes the possible thought of the wives that if they are divorced, the Holy Prophet ﷺ will probably not get women better than themselves. The verse under comment responds to their assessment of the situation. It purports to say that nothing is beyond Allah's power. If he divorces them, Allah will give him in exchange better wives than he has at the moment. This does not necessarily imply that there were better wives than the present holy wives at that time. Possibly such women were not available at that point of time, but, should the need have arisen, He could make other women better than they are. These verses specifically dealt with the holy wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, their deeds, their moral reform, their discipline and training. Similar injunctions are given in the verses that follow for the general body of Muslims and believers.

Verses 6 - 7

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ
وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ

وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا الْيَوْمَ
إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧﴾

O those who believe, save yourselves and your families from a fire, the fuel of which is human beings and stones, appointed on which are angels, stern and severe, who do not disobey Allah in what He orders them, and do whatever they are ordered to do. [6] O those who disbelieve, do not make excuses today. You will only be recompensed for what you have been doing. [7]

Commentary

قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ (O those who believe, save yourselves and your families from a fire...66:6). This verse addresses the general body of Muslims and enjoins upon them to safeguard themselves and their families from a fire of Hell whose fuel is people and stones. Then the verse goes on to describe the intensity and horror of the Hell-Fire. Towards the end of it the angels in charge of it, whose name is Zabaniah, are described. They are harsh and terrible from whom no inmate of Hell will be able to rescue himself by force, power, strength, flattery or bribery.

The word أَهْلِيكُمْ (your families) comprehends wife, children and slaves [males as well as females]. It is not inconceivable to include full-time servants in the imperative like slaves. When this verse was revealed, Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه inquired: "O Messenger of Allah, we understand how to save ourselves from Hell, that is, we guard ourselves against sins and carry out the Divine injunctions, but how do we safeguard our families from Hell?" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied: "Instruct them to refrain from deeds that Allah has prohibited, and ask them to carry out deeds that Allah has enjoined. This will rescue them from the Hell-Fire."

[Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī]

Education and Training of Wife and Children:

Every Muslim's Responsibility

The jurists have pointed out that, according to the verse under comment, it is the responsibility of every Muslim to educate the wife and children in matters of Shar'ī obligations, and in matters of *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* and train them diligently to act upon them. A *ḥadīth* says, "May

Allah shower His mercy upon a person who says: 'O my wife and children, (be mindful of) your prayers, your fasting, your alms, your indigent, your orphan, your neighbour! It is hopeful that Allah will gather all these with him in Paradise' 'Your prayers, your fasting' and so on' implies 'Take care of them. Do not ignore them.' The phrase **مَسْكِينِكُمْ يَتِيمِكُمْ** 'Your indigent, your orphan and so on' implies 'Fulfil their rights towards them willingly and readily.' Righteous elders have said that the person deepest in punishment on the Day of Judgement will be the one whose family is ignorant and unaware of the religion. [Rūḥ]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا الْيَوْمَ إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ (O those who disbelieve, do not make excuses today. You will only be recompensed for what you have been doing....66:7) After advising the general body of believers, the current verse turns attention to the non-believers who are asked not to try to make excuses, because they will not be accepted. They will be told that they are merely being repaid for what they did.

Verses 8 - 12

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تَوْبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا ۖ عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنْكُم سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُم جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۚ
يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِي اللَّهُ النَّبِيَّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ ۖ نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَىٰ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَتِمِّمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٨﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَمَا لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٩﴾ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا امْرَأَتَ نُوحٍ وَامْرَأَتَ لُوطَ ۖ كَانَتَا تَحْتَ عَبْدَيْنِ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا صَالِحِينَ فَخَانَتُهُمَا فَلَمْ يُغْنِيا عَنْهُمَا مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَقِيلَ ادْخُلَا النَّارَ مَعَ الدَّٰخِلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا امْرَأَتَ فِرْعَوْنَ إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَعَمَلِهِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١١﴾ وَمَرْيَمَ ابْنَتَ

عَمْرَانَ الَّتِي أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَصَدَّقَتْ
بِكَلِمَةٍ رَبِّهَا وَكُتِبَ وَكَانَتْ مِنَ الْقَتِيلِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

O those who believe, turn to Allah with a faithful repentance. It is hoped from your Lord that he will write off your faults, and will admit you to the gardens beneath which rivers flow, on the Day when Allah will not disgrace the Prophet and those who believed with him. Their light will run before them and to their right hands. They will say, "Our Lord, perfect for us our light, and forgive us. Indeed you are powerful over every thing." [8] O Prophet, carry out *jihād* (struggle) against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and be harsh with them. And their final abode is *Jahannam* (Hell), and it is an evil end. [9]

Allah has cited for the disbelievers the example of the wife of Nūḥ and the wife of Lūṭ. Both were married with two of Our righteous slaves, but betrayed them. So they could not avail them at all, and it was said, "Enter the Fire along with those who enter." [10] And Allah has cited for the believers the example of the wife of Fir'aun (the Pharaoh), when she said, "My Lord, build for me, near You, a house in the Paradise, and deliver me from Fir'aun and his deeds, and deliver me from the unjust people.", [11] and (also the example of) Maryam, daughter of 'Imrān who guarded her chastity, so We breathed into her Our spirit, and she testified to the truth of the words of her Lord and His books, and she was one of the devout. [12]

Commentary

تُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَصُوحًا (...turn to Allah with a faithful repentance...66:8). The word *taubah*, literally, means 'to turn' or 'to return', in the sense of turning or withdrawing from sins. In the terminology of the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, it signifies 'to regret committing sins in the past and to firmly resolve abstaining from them in future'. *Taubah* is qualified in the verse by the word *نصوح* *naṣūḥ*. If it is taken as the infinitive of *naṣaḥa* / *naṣīḥah*, it signifies 'to make pure and sincere'; and if it be derived from *naṣāḥah*, it signifies 'to repair clothes by sewing'. In terms of the first meaning, the expression *naṣūḥ* signifies sincere/faithful [repentance], free from pretence and hypocrisy. In this interpretation, a sinner is

required to regret the sins he has committed and give them up purely for the pleasure of Allah and for fear of Divine chastisement. In terms of the second meaning, *nāṣūḥ* would signify that 'the sinner is required to repair the torn clothes of righteous deeds'. Sayyidnā Ḥasan Baṣrī ؓ says that *taubatan nāṣūḥā* signifies that a person should regret his past evil actions, and make a firm resolve never to repeat them. *Kalbī* says the phrase *taubatan nāṣūḥā* signifies that a person should pray for pardon with his tongue, regret in his heart, and should prevent the limbs of his body from committing sins in the future.

Sayyidnā 'Alī ؓ was asked as to what is '*taubah*' and he replied that it consists of six elements: [1] to regret one's past evil deeds; [2] to carry out Divine duties that were missed; [3] to restore the rights that were usurped; [4] to ask forgiveness of a person who has been wronged by him physically or verbally; [5] to make a firm resolve of avoiding the sin in future; and [6] to consume one's self in obedience of Allah as one thus far consumed one's self in His disobedience. [Maḏharī]. In fact, all of the conditions of '*taubah*' put forward by Sayyidnā 'Alī ؓ are recognized by all the scholars. However, some have described them concisely and others in details.

عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنْكُمْ (It is hoped from your Lord that he will write off your faults...66:8). The verb '*asā*' means 'it is hoped'. In this context, it purports to mean 'promise', but the expression of 'hope' is used to indicate that *taubah* or any other righteous deeds are not the just and equal price for the Paradise or the divine forgiveness. In fact, one compensation for man's good deeds has already been given to him in this world in the form of worldly blessings. Therefore, as regards the law of equality, it is not necessary that he is further compensated by the Jannah. It entirely depends on Divine grace and favour as is mentioned in a Ḥadīth which says: 'Your actions alone cannot salvage you.' The Companions inquired: 'O Messenger of Allah, not even you?' He replied: 'No, not even me unless the Divine grace and mercy covers me.' [Bukhārī and Muslim as quoted by Maḏharī]

ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا امْرَأَتِ نُوحٍ (Allah has cited for the disbelievers the example of the wife of Nūḥ and the wife of Lūṭ...66:10). Towards the end of this Sūrah, Allah has set forth examples of four women. The first example comprises two women who were the wives of two Holy Prophets

عليهما السلام. They, in matters of religion, opposed their husbands and secretly sided with the unbelievers and pagans. As a result, they ended up in the abyss of Hell, and their marital relation with the prophets could not save them from the punishment. The name of the wife of Nūḥ عليه السلام is said to be Wāghilah, while the name of the wife of Lūṭ عليه السلام is said to be Wālihah. [Qurtubī] Some scholars have attributed other names to them.

The third woman is the one who was the wife of the Pharaoh, the worst disbeliever and claimant of godhead, but she believed in Mūsā عليه السلام. She was given such a high rank by Allah that she was shown her place in the Paradise, right here in this world, and the infidelity of her husband did not prove to be an impediment in her achieving this high rank.

The fourth woman is Maryam عليها السلام. She was not wife of anyone, but her faith and virtuous deeds earned for her such a high degree that she was invested with perfections of the prophets, even though she was not a prophet according to the majority of scholars. Verse [11] serves as a warning to the unbelievers who think that they will attain salvation merely by their companionship with believers, the good company will not rescue them in the Hereafter if they persist in their disbelief. So likewise, a disbeliever's disbelief will not harm a believing relative. Therefore, the *auliyas*' and *ambiyas*' wives should not carelessly take for granted that they will attain salvation on account of their husbands nor should the wife of a disbeliever think that his disbelief will harm her. Every person, man or woman, should be concerned about his/her own faith and action.

(And Allah has cited for the believers the example of the wife of Fir'aun (the Pharaoh), when she said, "My Lord, build for me, near You, a house in the Paradise...66:11) This is the example of the wife of Fir'aun (the Pharaoh) whose name was 'Āsiyah bint Muzāḥim. When Mūsā عليه السلام accomplished his task in defeating the sorcerers who embraced Mosaic faith, she too embraced the Mosaic faith and became a Muslim. Fir'aun ordered that she should be tortured severely and tormented harshly. According to some reports, her hands and feet were pegged with nails to the ground and a huge rock was placed on her chest, so that she might not be able to move. In this state she supplicated to Allah as mentioned in this verse. According to other reports, it was suggested that a huge rock be dropped on her. They had hardly dropped the rock and she prayed to

Allah as quoted in the verse. Allah then showed Sayyidah 'Āsiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا her house in Paradise. and while looking at this vision her soul departed. When the rock fell on her body, it was lifeless. [Maḏharī].

وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّهَا وَكُتِبَ (and she testified to the truth of the words of her Lord and His books, and she was one of the devout....66:12) The phrase 'Words of her Lord' refers to scriptures that were revealed to the Holy Prophets. The word *kutub* [Books] refers to the well-known celestial books - *Injīl*, *Zabūr* and *Torah*. The concluding statement وَكَانَتْ مِنَ الْقَانِتِينَ (and she was one of the devout....66:12) describes the quality of Sayyidah Maryam عليها السلام. The word *qānitīn* is the plural of *qānit* and signifies 'devout and obedient'. Sayyidnā Abū Mūsā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Whilst many men have attained spiritual perfection, among women only Sayyidah 'Āsiyah, wife of Fir'aun, and Sayyidah Maryam, daughter of 'Imrān عليها السلام, achieved this perfection." [Bukhārī and Muslim as quoted by Maḏharī]. Apparently, 'perfection' in this context refers to 'characteristics of Prophethood'. Despite being a woman, she achieved them. [Maḏharī]. And Allah knows best!

Alḥamdulillah
The Commentary on
Sūrah At-Taḥrīm
Ends here